

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-02 INR-10
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-20
/077 W

-----089926 121609Z /43

R 121415Z SEP 78
FM AMCONSUL STUTTGART
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4598
AMEMBASSY BONN
INFO USMISSION USBERLIN
AMCONSUL BREMEN
AMCONSUL DUSSELDORF
AMCONSUL FRANKFURT
AMCONSUL HAMBURG
AMCONSUL MUNICH
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GE
CINCUSAREUR HEIDELBERG GE

UNCLAS SECTION 1 OF 2 STUTTGART 1674

USCINCEUR AND CINCUSAREUR FOR POLADS

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT, GW
SUBJECT: CDU LAND CONVENTION A TRIUMPH FOR MINISTER-PRESIDENT
SPAETH

REF: A) STUTTGART 1654 B) STUTTGART 1629

1. SUMMARY. SPAETH CLEARLY BESTED FILBINGER AT THE CDU LAND
CONVENTION SEPT. 8-9 AND HAS FURTHER IMPOSED HIMSELF ON THE
SCENE AS NEW MINISTER-PRESIDENT AND THE REAL LEADER OF HIS PARTY.
SPAETH IS SEEN AS A SURE WINNER IN ANY STRUGGLE WITH FILBINGER
OVER THE PARTY CHAIRMANSHP. PRESS REPORTS FILBINGER PLANS
ANYWAY TO STEP DOWN AS PARTY CHAIRMAN AND LANDTAG DEPUTY TO
BE A CANDIDATE IN DIRECT ELECTIONS TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT.
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END SUMMARY.

2. THE CDU LAND CONVENTION HELD AT FORST SEPT. 8-9 WAS A
RESOUNDING SUCCESS FOR NEW MINISTER-PRESIDENT SPAETH AND MARKED
FURTHER DECLINE IN THE FORTUNES OF HANS FILBINGER. THE PRESS
CONCLUDES THAT A STRUGGLE FOR POWER WITHIN THE PARTY NOW SEEMS
UNAVOIDABLE BETWEEN THE TWO MEN BUT SPAETH IS CONSIDERED CERTAIN

TO EMERGE THE WINNER IN WRESTING THE CDU LAND CHAIRMANSHIP AWAY FROM FILBINGER.

3. AT FORST, FILBINGER'S CHOICE OF TACTICS WAS NO BETTER THAN THROUGHOUT THE LONG "AFFAIR" THAT LED TO HIS RESIGNATION AS MINISTER-PRESIDENT LAST MONTH. IN FACT, IT WAS STILL THE "AFFAIR" THAT WAS HIS UNDOING AT FORST. HIS SPEECH TO CONVENTION DELEGATES ON SEPT. 8 WAS A HARD-HITTING ATTACK ON THE SPD IN THE COURSE OF WHICH HE SAID SOME HARSH THINGS ABOUT EPPLER, SPD LAND CHAIRMAN AND FACTION LEADER IN THE LANDTAG. FILBINGER TOOK THE OCCASION ALSO TO PLEAD ANEW DEFENSE OF HIS PAST ACTIONS, DISMISSING AS DISTORTED FACTS AND HYPOCRISY THE CHARGES THAT HAD LED TO HIS RESIGNATION AS MINISTER-PRESIDENT. IN THIS CONTEXT HE AGAIN SINGLED OUT EPPLER FOR MENTION. FILBINGER'S ATTACK ON EPPLER, SEEMINGLY MOTIVATED AS MUCH BY PERSONAL AS WELL AS PARTISAN ANIMOSITY, DID NOT GO DOWN WELL WITH CONVENTION DELEGATES, AND IT ALSO WENT DIRECTLY COUNTER TO SPAETH'S EFFORTS THE PREVIOUS WEEK (REF A) TO SMOOTH OVER DIFFERENCES AMONG THE POLITICAL PARTIES IN THE LANDTAG. FILBINGER'S SPEECH RECEIVED LITTLE APPLAUSE.

3. SPAETH, ON THE OTHER HAND, RECEIVED "THUNDEROUS" APPLAUSE SEPT. 9 FOR A SPEECH WHICH, THE PRESS SAYS, HAD AN "ELECTRIFYING" EFFECT ON THE CONVENTION DELEGATES. ADROITLY EXPLOITING THE OPENING FILBINGER HAD PROVIDED HIM, SPAETH TOOK FILBINGER TO TASK FOR CONTINUING POLEMIC AND INVECTIVE. THIS WAS NOT GOOD FOR THE UNCLASSIFIED

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CDU AS A PARTY, SAID SPAETH, NOR WAS IT CONDUCIVE TO THE HARMONY HE HOPED TO PRODUCE AMONG ALL PARTIES IN THE LANDTAG. THE REMAINDER OF SPAETH'S SPEECH WAS DEVOTED TO FURTHER OUTLINING OF HIS GENERAL PHILOSOPHY AND PROGRAM. CDU STRENGTH MUST BE BASED ON A FREE SOCIETY IN WHICH EACH CITIZEN COULD PLAY A GREATER ROLE AND YOUNG PEOPLE WERE GIVEN GREATER OPPORTUNITIES. THE ECONOMY MUST BE STABILIZED IN A CLIMATE OF CONFIDENCE FOR THE MIDDLE CLASSES, BUT NOT BY THE METHODS OF CONTROLLED ECONOMY AS FAVORED BY THE SPD AND THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT IN BONN. HE ATTACKED "GREEN LISTS" AS REPRESENTING HETEROGENOUS INTERESTS THAT TOO OFTEN LET THEMSELVES BE DOMINATED BY THE MORE RADICAL ELEMENTS IN THEIR MIDST. HE CAME OUT GUARDEDLY IN SUPPORT OF INSTALLATION OF NUCLEAR POWER PLANTS IN BADEN-WUERTTEMBERG, RPVIDED THIS WAS DEMONSTRABLY THE ONLY WAY OF MEETING ESSENTIAL NEEDS FOR ENERGY. THE SPEECH, SAID THE STUTTGARTER NACHRICHTEN, HAD "ALMOST A DRUGLIKE EFFECT" ON THE DELEGATES, SEEMINGLY PROMISING A RETURN TO THE "BLISSFUL DAYS" OF CDU HARMONY IN BADEN-WUERTTEMBERG. THE STUTTGARTER ZEITUNG CAPTIONED ITS LEAD EDITORIAL "SPAETH THE VICTOR" (SIEGER SPAETH).

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USCINCEUR AND CINCUSAREUR FOR POLADS

4. CDU NATIONAL CHAIRMAN HELMUT KOHL ALSO SPOKE BEFORE THE LAND CONVENTION BUT THE PRESS GAVE HIS REMARKS LITTLE ATTENTION. KOHL, LIKE FILBINGER, LAUNCHED OUT AGAINST THE SPD, WHICH PROMPTED ONE REPORTER TO COMMENT THAT KOHL SEEMD TO THINK HE WAS CAMPAIGNING IN HESSE RATHER THAN ADDRESSING A CDU MEETING IN BADEN-WUERTTEMBERG.

5. COMMENT - WITH HIS PERFORMANCE AT THE LAND CONVENTION SPAETH HAS SUCCEEDED, IN HIS SHORT TIME IN OFFICE, IN FULLY IMPOSING HIMSELF NOT ONLY AS MINISTER-PRESIDENT BUT AS THE REAL LEADER OF THE CDU PARTY IN BADEN-WUERTTEMBERG. AT FORST, SPAETH AND NOT FILBINGER EMERGED AS THE STATESMAN OF THE PARTY. SPAETH'S EMPHASIS ON A FREE, UNFETTERED SOCIETY AND ON THE MIDDLE CLASSES MAY WELL HAVE BEEN CALCULATED TO UNDERCUT FILBINGER'S CONTINUED

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SUPPORT AMONG SOME RIGHT WING ELEMENTS OF THE PARTY. FOR FILBINGER THE HANDWRITING MAY HAVE APPEARED CLEARLY ON THE WALL

AT FORST, SINCE THE STUTTGARTER NACHRICHTEN REPORTS ON SEPT. 12
THAT FILBINGER NOW PLANS TO RUN AS CANDIDATE IN THE DIRECT
ELECTIONS FOR THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, GIVING UP HIS CDU LAND
CHAIRMANSHIP AS WELL AS HIS SEAT IN THE LANDTAG.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: LAND, PRESIDENT, CENTRAL LEGISLATURE, SPEECHES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 12 sep 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 jan 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978STUTTGO1674
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780370-0887
Format: TEL
From: STUTTGART
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780975/aaaacjuo.tel
Line Count: 175
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 6ce6df51-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 STUTTGART 1654, 78 STUTTGART 1629
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 29 mar 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: N/A
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1461805
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: CDU LAND CONVENTION A TRIUMPH FOR MINISTER-PRESIDENT SPAETH
TAGS: PINT, GE, (SPAETH, LOTHAR)
To: STATE BONN
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/6ce6df51-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014